(d) and (e) The information is not available readily.

**Salt Industry**

1493. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report which appeared in the 'Financial Express' of 16th August, 1991 captioned "Salt industry reaching under constraints";

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial steps are being taken in this regard so that salt industry may overcome its present problem and consumers may get salt at fair prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) and (b) Government has seen the report on salt industry which appeared in the 'Financial Express' dated 16th August, 1991 indicating inadequate supply of wagons by the Railways, supply of salt in open wagons leading to shortage of destination and decrease in iodine content, charging freight by Railways for the salt moved by the longer route, stagnation of export due to low rate of loading, ceiling limit for export of iodised salt, diesel cruch, steady rise in salt prices since March, 1989 etc.

(c) A statement is attached.

**Statement**

The remedial steps initiated by the Government to overcome the present problems and ensure availability of salt to the consumers at fair prices are:—

1. The Railways have been required to clear pending indents for salt mainly on the West Zone;

2. The Railways are supplying covered wagons during the period from 15th June to 15th September. Though they have been requested for movement of salt by covered wagons thrughout the whole year, they expressed their inability to do so because of their problems;

3. The Railways have been requested to move common salt for the purpose of iodisation under Category 'B';

4. The Railways have been requested to charge freight by shorter route for salt moved by longer route;

5. Imposition of ceiling limit of 5 lakh tonnes on iodised salt does not stand in the way of exports as the present level of export of iodised salt is very low (approximately 70,000 tonnes per annum);

6. The salt manufacturers have been advised to hold the price line;

7. The Railways have been requested to supply additional rakes for some of the States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar where increase in the price was reported;

8. The Railways have been requested to clear pending indents on priority basis to increase availability of edible salt at the consuming centres;

9. Monitoring of daily and weekly prices of salt has been undertaken. The State Governments/Union Territories have also been requested to monitor prices and also to take dehoarding measures to avoid artificial scarcity;

10. Salt manufacturers have been advised to operate their holdings to the maximum so as to meet the increasing demand;

11. Diesel crunch was for a very short period and now it is being made available freely to the salt industries;

12. An understanding is being arrived mutually between salt manufacturers and Port authorities regarding fixation of quantity for export;

13. Salt producing State Governments have been requested to identify more areas for salt production and to assign such areas to the new entrepreneurs; and

14. Exploitation of natural salt deposits in the Greater Rann of Kutch in Gujarat is being explored.

**Exhibitions-cum-sales arranged by DSIDCO**

1494. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of exhibitions-cum-sales arranged by the Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation during the last three years; and

(b) what are the figures regarding expenditure on these sales and earning through them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) and (b) DSIDC organised exhibitions during the last three years as follows:

| S. No. | Year | No. or Exhibition |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1988-89 | 15 |
| 2 | 1989-90 | 16 |
| 3. | 1990-91 | 14 |

Figures of year-wise expenditure and earnings through these exhibitions are as under:—

(Rs. in Lakhs)

| Year | Expenditure | Earnings |
|---|---|---|
| 1988-89 | 3.28 | 6.77 |
| 1989-90 | 3.50 | 7.10 |
| 1990-91 | 2.79 | 4.50 |

**Reduction in prices of newsprint**

1495. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would consider to reduce the hike in the prices of newsprint;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, in what manner Government propose to ensure that the small and medium newspapers are net forced to lose their publication?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. J. KURIEN): (a) to (c) In so far as the prices of indigenous newsprint are concerned, there is, at present, no statutory control thereon. However, any revision in the prices of indigenous newsprint is kept under ex-port periodic review by Government. As regards the prices of imported newspint, these are fixed quarterly by the Newsprint Price Fixation Advisory Committee represented, among others, by Newspaper Industry. It may also be mentioned that while considering the problems of the newspapers industry, Government response is determined by its overriding concern for a healthy growth of the Press.

**Blending of all edible oils**

1496. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently received any suggestion from consumers for blending of all edible oils and their sale by vanaspati makers as Oil in loose condition as is being done for milk by various Government agencies in Delhi, Calcutta elsewhere through Public Distribution System; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take to ensure that the sale of various other oils such as mustard, coconut, groundnut, soyabean, til oils continue to be sold in pure form to ensure consumers choice on healt and other grounds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) No, Sir.